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Pikes Peak Summit Complex Newsletter July 2021

Pikes Peak Summit Visitor Center celebrates grand opening
*Highest visitor center in the world opens with fanfare at 14,115 feet
above sea level*



The new Pikes Peak Summit Visitor Center, following three years of construction, celebrated its grand opening with a ribbon cutting ceremony on June 30. Colorado Governor Jared Polis joined Colorado Springs Mayor John Suthers and Frank Beum from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service in commemorating the historic event on the summit of Pikes Peak, a National Historic Landmark. At 14,115 feet above sea level, it is the highest altitude visitor center in the world. [CLICK HERE to View Ribbon Cutting Program.](#)



Mayor Suthers and Governor Polis cut the ribbon. Photo Credit: City of Colorado Springs

"The City of Colorado Springs and many other stakeholders have long been committed to the task of building a new Pikes Peak Summit Visitor Center that is truly worthy of the majesty and magnificence of Pikes Peak and the luster of its history," said Suthers. "We now have a visitor center we can all be proud of, a place that William Palmer, Spencer Penrose and the generations of Pikes Peak advocates who have come before us would be proud of. Today we dedicate a building that complements the majesty of a great mountain, and we commence a new era in the history of Pikes Peak and of Colorado Springs."

The co-hosted celebration also recognized the reopening of The Broadmoor Manitou & Pikes Peak Cog Railway, which has taken visitors to the summit of Pikes Peak since 1891. The Cog, America's highest railway, reopened in May

2021 after a three-year, \$100 million rebuild.



There's still time to give. Be part of Pikes Peak forever. Give your family and friends something priceless - their name on America's Mountain - when you support the new Pikes Peak Summit Complex.

How Your Gift Helps

The new Summit Visitor Center opened June 24. Generous donors have already contributed \$12.8 million, bringing us to more than 84 percent of our \$15 million fundraising campaign goal. Several opportunities remain to leave your own lasting legacy through sponsorships at the new Pikes Peak Summit Complex. For more information, send an email to: Campaign.dl@coloradosprings.gov

Your gift will be used to help the Summit Complex reach "Living Building Challenge" certification, the world's most progressive environmental performance standard. Living Buildings safeguard the environment, preserve the surrounding habitat, and contribute to human health.

[Donate Now!](#)

QUICK LINKS

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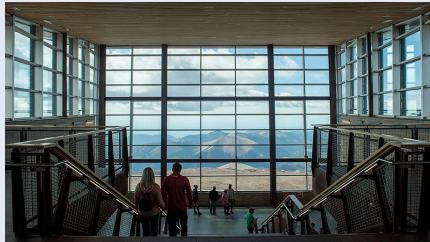
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**PIKES PEAK SUMMIT COMPLEX
RIBBON CUTTING CELEBRATION**

Photo Credit: City of Colorado Springs

"Colorado Springs now has another world class attraction, and I could not be more proud of the new and improved Cog Railway and Summit Visitor Center," said Polis. "I have no doubt that we too will continue to summit mountains -- because that's the Colorado way, and the Cog Railway and Pikes Peak Highway will help get us there. Onward and upward."

In addition to the breathtaking views, made even more dramatic by the new elevated pathway and overlook designed to help protect the summit's fragile tundra, there are now digitally interactive displays that bring the history, significance, and geology of the mountain to life both inside and outside the new building, plus fresh menu and retail options. Visitors can still experience the famous high-altitude donut recipe used since 1916.



Grand Entrance - Opening Day. Photo Credit: City of Colorado Springs

A predominately one-story form seemingly carved from the southeast side of the peak, the new building offers unobstructed views and is reminiscent of the crags and rock formations found above tree line. It is sited to withstand the extreme environmental conditions of the summit. Nestled into the mountain, exposure to winds that can exceed 230 miles per hour is minimized, while the mass of the building provides sheltered outdoor areas to enjoy the views.

The new building was designed to achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver certification, a globally recognized symbol of sustainability achievement. It also strives to achieve the Living Building Challenge (LBC), a two-year certification process, as a highly sustainable, net-zero energy building. Currently, no other buildings in Colorado are fully LBC certified. The entire site was also designed to meet the latest Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. It was constructed by GE Johnson (Colorado Springs) and designed by GWWO Architects (Baltimore, Md.) in collaboration with RTA Architects (Colorado Springs) as architect of record.



Pikes Peak Summit Visitors Center



Grand Opening
June 30, 2021

[Pikes Peak Summit Visitors Center Grand Opening Celebration Video](#)

The visitor center and 19-mile highway is operated by Pikes Peak - America's Mountain (PPAM), an enterprise of the City of Colorado Springs, through a special use permit from the U.S. Forest Service. The total project cost is an estimated \$65 million, funded in part by revenue bonds and reserves from PPAM, which generates revenue through highway toll fees and concession sales. The new visitor center is part of the 38,000-square-foot Pikes Peak Summit Complex, which also houses a Colorado Springs Utilities communications facility and the U.S. Army's High Altitude Research Laboratory.

"I am proud to say that the Pikes Peak Summit Complex embodies the USDA Forest Service goals of harmonizing the environment, restoring natural resources and incorporating the cultural values of our Native American Tribal communities," said Beum, U.S. Forest Service Rocky Mountain Region regional forester. "The collaborative efforts of several dedicated partners have made this new visitor experience possible for people worldwide to enjoy this beacon of American history in a new and wonderful way."

The new building is opening in phases, so early visitors can expect to see final construction work taking place and finishing touches being made to the interpretive exhibits and signage. Exterior site work, including paving, is expected to last through September. It replaces the Summit House, which had operated since 1964. The very first summit house was constructed in 1873, and an original wall from that structure has been preserved on the summit. It had welcomed guests like Katharine Lee Bates who authored "America the Beautiful" following her visit to the summit in 1893.



Know Before You Go: Summit parking limited through July

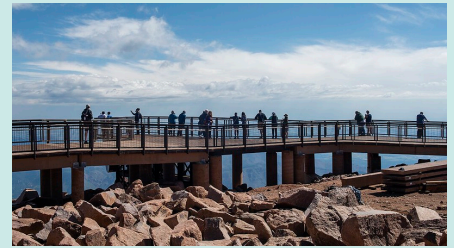
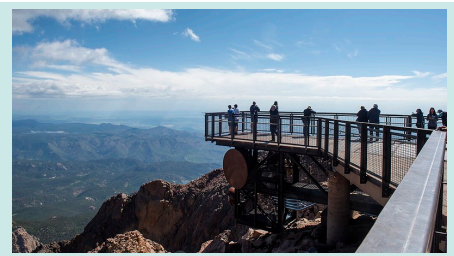


Pikes Peak Shuttle - Opening Day. Photo Credit: City of Colorado Springs

There will be very limited parking on the summit for guests while the final site work is completed from June 15 to the end of July. Construction could extend this timeline. Pikes Peak - America's Mountain is providing a 20% discount to highway guests during this time when summit access cannot be guaranteed. To help as many guests as possible reach the summit, most visitors will be required to board a free shuttle from Devils Playground, located at mile 16 on the 19-mile highway. Vehicles carrying persons with disabilities or young children in car seats may be permitted to drive to the summit if there is parking available. Only 35 parking spots will be available for visitors on the summit while this site work is underway.

Shuttles will run every 15-20 minutes. Guests should anticipate long wait times for the shuttle due to the limited service. Pets and bicycles are not allowed on the shuttle. The shuttle will not be available on July 13 and July 19. On these days the summit will be closed to vehicular traffic. Visitors will still be able to drive to Devils Playground. Hikers should plan to hike to Devils Playground if they have coordinated a ride down from the summit.

As always, plan ahead and call 719-385-7325 for current highway conditions. Hours of operation and other information about the highway, can be found at PikesPeakColorado.com




Good Morning America Visits Pikes Peak



[CLICK HERE to view Good Morning America visiting Pikes Peak](#)

How Colorado is bouncing back after a rough year. ABC News' Rob Marciano takes a look at the many outdoor activities the Centennial State has to offer.

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